

Presidents of stakes with their counselors were well represented from the ninety-six stakes of Zion.

The Priesthood Quorums, including the high priests, seventies and elders, and bishops and their counselors, from all parts of the Church, were in attendance; officers of the auxiliary organizations both of men and of women were present, and also members of the Board of Education.

Mission Presidents were in attendance, as follow: Henry H. Rolapp, Eastern States; John H. Taylor, Northern States; Samuel O. Bennion, Central States; John M. Knight, Western States; Wm. R. Sloan, Northwestern States; Chas. H. Hart, Canada; John G. Allred, Northcentral States; Charles A. Callis, Southern States; Rey L. Pratt, Mexico; Benjamin Goddard, Bureau of Information, Temple Block, Salt Lake City, Utah.

The choir sang, "Praise to the man who communed with Jehovah."

Elder Peter G. Johnston, of the Church Auditing Committee, offered the opening prayer.

The choir sang the anthem, "They that sow in tears."

PRESIDENT HEBER J. GRANT

It has been customary at the April Conferences to make announcements and to read some statistics. We regret the absence of Elder Reed Smoot, of the Council of the Twelve. I have a telegram from him reading as follows:

TELEGRAM FROM ELDER REED SMOOT

"I send greetings to the Saints assembled at the General Conference. Alie's serious sickness, only thing that prevents my presence. Blessings of God is the only power that can save her. I would appreciate the faith and prayers of the people assembled, asking our heavenly Father to grant, if it is his will, that she be given further life, with renewed health and strength."

REED SMOOT.

OTHER AUTHORITIES ABSENT

The Presiding Patriarch is absent on account of ill health.

As you all know, Elder James E. Talmage, of the Council of the Twelve, is presiding over the European mission, and cannot, therefore, be with us. I regret, on account of the serious illness of a daughter of Brother Joseph W. McMurrin, of the First Council of Seventy, that he also is absent. All the others of the General Authorities of the Church are in attendance today.

CHANGES AND RELEASES

There has been a change in the presidency of the Lethbridge stake, President Hugh B. Brown being honorably released, and Asael E. Palmer appointed president; a change also in the Maricopa stake, J. W.

Lesueur being honorably released and James Robert Price being sustained as president.

Changes and releases in the mission field: John H. Anderson has been released as president of the Swedish mission, and Andrew Johnson appointed to succeed him.

Ernest LeRoy Butler has been released as president of the Samoan mission, and Willard L. Smith appointed as president.

Brigham S. Young has been released as president of the Northwestern States mission and William R. Sloan appointed as his successor.

Joseph Quinney, Jr., has been released as president of the Canadian mission, and Charles H. Hart appointed as his successor.

Brigham H. Roberts has been released as president of the Eastern States mission, and Henry H. Rolapp appointed as his successor.

New wards have been organized: Kimball ward, St. Joseph stake; Cedar Third ward, Parowan stake; Manila ward, Lyman stake; Lankershim ward, Los Angeles stake; Littlefield ward, Moapa stake; Ogden Twentieth ward, Ogden stake; and the Graham and Hibbard wards in the St. Joseph stake have been combined.

We mourn the loss of the following bishops since our last meeting: John A. Hunt of St. Charles ward, Bear Lake stake; Edgar O. Nielson of Cleveland ward, Bannock stake; Edwin Olpin of Pleasant Grove First ward, Alpine stake, and John J. Burgner of Darby ward, Teton stake.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Following is a list of expenditures from the tithes of the Church for the year 1926:

Stake and Ward Purposes—There has been returned from the tithes to the stakes and wards for operation, maintenance, and building construction, \$1,530,243.64.

Education—Expended for the construction and operation of Church schools, \$837,810.47.

Temples—Expended for the construction, maintenance, and operation of temples, \$322,500.36.

Charities—For the care of the worthy poor and other charitable purposes, including hospital treatment, \$187,570.43.

Missions—For the maintenance and operation of all the missions, and for the erection of places of worship and other buildings in the missions, \$738,737.75. Total \$3,616,862.65.

Other Charities—In addition to charities paid from the tithes, as before named, there have also been disbursed the Fast Offerings, other charities and assistance rendered by the Relief Society, in the sum of \$436,055.44, which amount, added to the \$187,570.43 paid from the tithes, makes the total charity assistance rendered by the Church, \$623,625.87.

There were transferred from the California mission, at the time of the organization of the Los Angeles stake of Zion, the Adams ward

chapel and other chapels to the value of \$200,000. The California mission at the present time owns chapels of a value of over \$400,000. The chapel at Oakland is as fine a chapel, and holds about as many people, as any of our ward chapels in the stakes of Zion. It has been decided to organize another stake of Zion in Northern California, with San Francisco, Oakland and surrounding country to compose that stake.

There have been collected by the various wards of the Church and paid to missionaries, to assist in their maintenance, \$128,299.65.

REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

"President Heber J. Grant and Counselors, Building.

"*Dear Brethren:* As the Church Auditing Committee, we have to report that the accounting of the Church, as shown by the records in the First Presidency's office and in the office of the Presiding Bishopric, is all that could be desired. The receipts and disbursements, the revenues and expenses of the Church are so carefully and accurately kept that the present worth or financial status of the Church is clearly shown. The affairs of the Church are wisely administered, and the present showing is excellent. It is gratifying to know that the credit of the Church comes under the very highest rating, but it is still more gratifying to know that the Church is under no necessity at present to use its credit in the commercial world by borrowing money.

"(Signed)

"HENRY H. ROLAPP,

"JOHN C. CUTLER,

"PETER G. JOHNSTON,

"Auditing Committee."

STATISTICS

Church Growth—Children blessed and entered on the records of the Church in the stakes and missions, 19,701.

Children baptized in the stakes and missions, 15,024.

Converts baptized and entered on the records of the stakes and missions, 6,663.

There are now 96 stakes of Zion, 915 wards, 77 independent branches connected with the stakes, and 27 missions and 734 branches in the missions.

Social Statistics—Birth rate, 31 per thousand.

Marriage rate, 13.9 per thousand.

Death rate, 7.7 per thousand.

Families owning their own homes, 72 per cent.

Persons recommended to the temple, 58,958, or 6 per cent more than in 1925.

Missionaries from Zion, December 31, 1926.....2,188

Local missionaries 72

Engaged in missionary work in stakes2,260
1,140

Total3,400

The Assistant Historian of the Church, Elder Andrew Jensen, has

handed me a compilation of the missionaries that have been in the field from the year 1830 until 1926. The lowest number is 16 missionaries, the first year of the Church. The highest number sent out in any year is 1,313, in 1925; 1,235 in 1926, and 1,211 in 1919. The total is between 35,000 and 40,000 missionaries that have been sent into the field.

REPORTS FROM THE MISSIONS

Speaking of the missions, I will read some few requests from a number of mission presidents:

The Northcentral States: "We shall be losing about twenty missionaries in the next twenty days, which will bring us down to about fifty-seven. Our greatest need, therefore, is more missionaries."

Central States: "We need long-term missionaries more than anything else right at the present time."

California mission: "We are parting with short-term missionaries almost daily, and need fifty elders and twenty-five lady missionaries to care properly for the districts that are open. More missionaries will be released during the next three months than the foregoing number."

Australian mission: "In this report we have four fewer missionaries than a year ago, and in February we have nine who will leave this mission, and unless we receive recruits very fast we will be very short-handed by the first of March."

German-Austrian mission: "Our work is going forward by leaps and bounds. We are needing four or five elders each month in order to hold our present field. We should be opening new fields."

Danish mission: "Elders are needed as we will soon be seriously handicapped on account of so many who will receive releases to return home."

Swedish mission: "During the coming month there will be about five other elders released. We would appreciate receiving more brethren, especially those who understand Swedish; or better still if they can speak it."

The French and Swiss-German missions also make the same appeal.

(At this point President B. H. Roberts remarked: "I wish to join the chorus in behalf of the *Eastern States mission*.")

I might say that the chorus will be unanimous, for I do not believe there is a single mission that has not made appeals, but I have just put down a few to read here this afternoon.

(President B. H. Roberts: "President Grant, remember our great population in proportion to our number.")

I find that each and every mission president is thoroughly converted that he needs more missionaries than the others.

There is another thing that I rejoice in, above everything else in our missionary work, and that is, all the missionaries are thoroughly convinced that their mission president is the finest of all the mission presidents, and that their mission is the best, although it may be in far-off Australia, or any other place. The outpouring of the Spirit of the

Lord upon our missionaries is such that they rejoice and are happy in their labors.

VISITS SINCE LAST CONFERENCE

Since our last conference it has fallen to my lot to be actively engaged in visiting some of the stakes of Zion. I have visited the Big Horn section of the country and other sections of Wyoming and Montana. I also visited some of the wards in the San Luis valley, dedicating a small chapel in Wyoming and one in Denver, Colorado. I visited the St. Joseph, Maricopa and Los Angeles stakes, and some of the stakes in Utah, holding meetings with the Saints in Arizona and dedicating two chapels there and four in the Los Angeles stake. I have had the pleasure of holding meetings with the Saints and missionaries in Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska; Rock Springs and Green River, Wyoming. This was the first time that I have had the pleasure of being at Lincoln, the capital of Nebraska, or at Green River and Rock Springs. In addition I have visited a number of the wards in the different stakes here in Utah, dedicating chapels, during the last six months.

FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE CHURCH

There is a most wonderful change in the attitude of the people of the world towards the Latter-day Saints. I find no difficulty whatever in getting publicity in the various papers; and when I travel, in different cities in the east and west, the north or the south, those who have interviewed me have given correct reports of the interviews. Brother James E. Talmage is also getting splendid publicity in the European papers. He has extensive notices and there seems to be no prejudice in the press of Great Britain at the present time.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE FORMER ATTITUDE IN ENGLAND

When I was in Europe, as the president of the European mission, during the entire three years that I was there, they published no article that we presented, and no report of a favorable nature was ever published in any of the papers. I call to mind visiting one of the great London papers that had published from seven to ten columns of the vilest statements regarding the Latter-day Saints. I took with me a letter of introduction from the manager of the shipping house in Liverpool with which we had done business for over 60 years, vouching for the integrity, not only of myself but of all my predecessors as the presidents of the European mission of the Church. The editors of this paper positively refused to make any refutation of the slanderous articles they had published, or to publish a single thing that I wrote, announcing that they thought they had published exactly what they ought about the "Mormon" people. I told them that I defied them to find a man that had written any of those articles who could furnish them with a certificate of character, but that I carried with me a certificate of my integrity and honesty, signed by all the non-"Mormon" bankers in Salt Lake City at that time; that I also had letters from bankers and in-